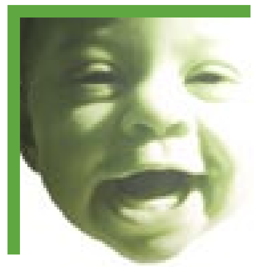
Employer INVESTMENT

Child Care: It's Good Business



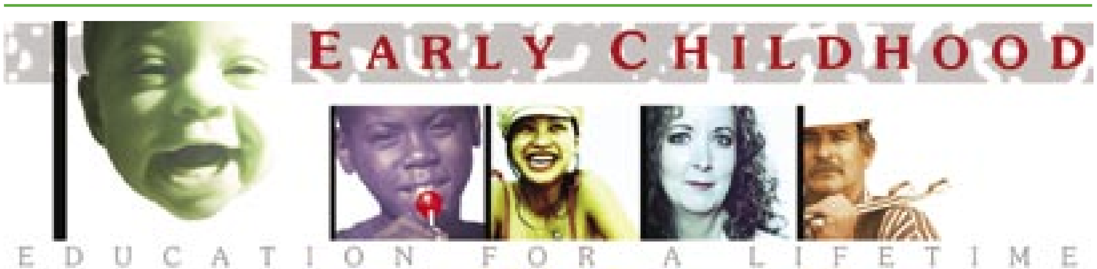


Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Employer Investment has been developed as a resource for the Employer Strategy Session of Governor Warner's Early Childhood Summit on May 25, 2005. The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) is grateful for partners, Bon Secours Richmond Health System and the VCU Health System, for generous underwriting of this event.

VDSS is indebted to the Michigan 4C Association for permission to utilize *Child Care and the Workplace* as a basis for Virginia's guide for employers, and to the Virginia Child Care Resource and Referral Network for its guidance in securing and editing the Michigan document. In addition, VDSS thanks the Virginia Department of Taxation, the VDSS Division of Licensing Programs and VDSS Division of Child Care and Development for reviewing and updating portions to relevance in Virginia.

Employer Investment is modeled after *Child Care and the Workplace* by Michigan 4C Association. This association considered the following documents during the development of this publication: *Child Care Options for Employers*, Lesia Oesterreich (Iowa State University); *Child Care Options for the '90s*, James G. Beierlein, James E. Van Horn and Lyn C. Horning (Penn State University); *Employer Options for Child Care*, Abby Baucom and Charles A. Smith (Kansas State University); and *Engaging Business Partners: An Employer Toolkit Template* (The Child Care Partnership Project, Child Care Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families).

To download additional copies of this resource, please contact the Virginia Child Care Resource and Referral Network at (804) 285-0846 or (866) 481-1913, or download from www.vaccrrn.org or www.dss.virginia.gov.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

It's Good Business to Invest in Child Care

The Future Workforce: New Challenges for Employers

The U.S. Department of Labor notes that the labor force is growing less than one percent annually. The number of available workers aged 26 to 44 will shrink between now and 2006. By 2011, there will be more jobs than skilled workers in the United States.

Slow population growth will further tighten an already tight labor market, making the ability to attract and retain talent even more critical. The need for qualified workers forces businesses to rethink strategies to ensure quality candidates. One important way to ensure a quality future workforce is to invest in child care now. Quality child care is an important benefit to the current workforce and the cornerstone of an educated workforce tomorrow.

Why Address Child Care Issues?

Child care demands are challenging for employees, especially working parents juggling work and family commitments. There is a cost to business when work and family responsibilities come into conflict unexpectedly. Family issues, including problems with child care arrangements, are cited as the most frequent reason for an unexpected absence at work. Unexpected problems with child care arrangements, leading to unexpected absence at work, cost U.S. employers approximately $3 billion each year.

Programs that balance work and family commitments have been found to reduce costs of absenteeism and turnover, while increasing productivity and job satisfaction. In fact, employers of choice, businesses with progressive human resource programs, tend to outperform their competitors, according to a 2000 study of Fortune's 100 Best Companies to Work For by Vanderbilt University and Hewitt Associates.

As the demand for skilled labor increases and the workforce shrinks, the need for talent pushes resilient businesses to:

- Act strategically to recruit and retain employees.
- Proactively strengthen the workforce of tomorrow.

Consideration of work life issues of the current workforce, including assistance with providing high-quality child care for employees' children, can address both goals by leading to a reliable, stable workforce today and a more capable workforce tomorrow.

Why Does Quality Matter?

Children in child care benefit from high-quality experiences in numerous ways. Since high-quality care involves consistent, dependable caregivers with the skills and education to provide a learning-rich, developmentally appropriate environment, parents benefit from knowing that their children are in good hands, allowing them to work productively. Research has shown that such caregivers support children not only in their educational growth, but also in their social and emotional development, which is so critical in this pivotal time of life.

In the first three to five years of life, 85 to 90 percent of the brain's development takes place. This formation impacts an individual's cognitive ability, the capacity to form and maintain relationships, and other lifelong skills that largely determine an individual's life success. Research shows that high-quality early experiences can have a profound effect on a child's development, when the foundation of literacy, numeracy, physical health, social and emotional growth is laid. Children who enter kindergarten with a solid foundation of skills are more likely to have school success and ultimately, life success.

Children experiencing high-quality early care and education are less likely to repeat a grade in school, have an unplanned pregnancy, drop out of school and depend on public assistance. They are more likely to graduate from high school, go to college, buy a home and have the skills and ability to be the capable workers and critical thinkers needed for a strong, competitive future workforce. In fact, economic research shows that investments in high-quality early childhood education in communities can have a 12 percent rate of return.

Investing in high-quality child care makes sense not only in terms of human capital, but also for the Commonwealth's economy. By assisting employees with accessing high-quality care for their children, employers have the opportunity to play a significant role in these outcomes.

Tax Benefits

Child care assistance provided by employers is often a tax-deductible business expense. Some eligible deductions are discussed below. Tax incentives and programs related to employee child care may be state, county and community specific. In addition, please note that tax benefits may vary in accordance with the manner for which the child care is provided. An accountant or tax counsel can provide information on relevant tax laws.

Business Expenses

Because they reduce absenteeism and turnover, aid in recruitment and retention of employees, and increase productivity, child care expenditures may be deductible as an ordinary business expense under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 162. Employer contributions to a welfare benefit fund, such as a Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association (VEBA), may also be deductible.

Charitable Contributions

An employer may be entitled to a charitable contribution deduction for donating to a qualifying tax-exempt child care organization.

Capital Expenses

Costs incurred for acquiring, constructing and/or remodeling a building to be used as a child care center can be depreciated over a 39 year period under the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System described in IRC Section 168. Costs of equipping the building can be depreciated over varying recovery periods, depending on the type of business in which the center is located and the type of equipment required. See IRS Publication 946 for specific depreciation instructions.

Start-Up Expenses

Start-up and investigatory expenses incurred in the development of a new child care center may be amortized over 60 months or more under IRC Section 195. Eligible expenses may include costs for advertising, needs assessments, consultant services and staff training.

Tax-Exempt Organizations

An employer-sponsored child care center may be established as a tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization. The organization providing child care services must apply to the IRS for tax-exempt status. The employer's contributions to the center may be deductible as charitable contributions. However, it is required that the center also must be open to the general public. An employer also may be able to deduct child care benefits provided through a (VEBA) 501 (c) (9).

Dependent Care Assistance Plan (DCAP)

Though primarily a tax benefit for employees, DCAPs also provide a tax incentive to employers. A DCAP is one type of flexible spending account in which an employee sets aside a certain amount each month to pay for dependent care. Neither the employee nor the employer pays income or FICA taxes on the amount used for dependent care if the benefit is offered under a cafeteria plan as defined in IRC section 125.

Virginia Tax Benefits

Because the Commonwealth conforms to the IRC, the federal tax benefits mentioned above would flow through to the taxpayer's Virginia income tax return. In addition, Virginia offers the Day-Care Facility Investment Tax Credit. This credit is available to Virginia employers for expenditures incurred to establish a child care facility for the children of employees. The maximum credit is $25,000, and any unused credit may be carried forward for three taxable years. To be eligible, the employer's child care facility may be licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services and used primarily by the children of the taxpayer's employees.

"As a manager at a small company with only 25 employees, all employees are important to our bottom line, but there are four people who are absolutely critical to our ability to get out the product. All four of them currently use child care. If I lose just one of them for one day because their child care breaks down, the productivity loss is over $5,000 for that one day."
Executive Vice-President, manufacturing company

Getting Started

All successful employer child care initiatives have one thing in common — careful planning. Getting started involves forming a project team, collecting information and establishing shared goals and objectives.

Address Business Realities

Prior to formal planning, employers need to consider the needs of their workforces and their ability and willingness to address those needs. Analyzing business realities and internal needs may prevent ill-conceived plans and uncover workable opportunities.

Identify Team Members & Champions

Committed individuals are critical to thoughtful planning. Identify key people to join the team and immediately seek an endorsement from upper management to explore options. Consider including child care experts from the community to assist with early planning.

Establish Objectives and Goals

Begin the planning process by asking, “Why are we considering employee child care programs?” Discuss the ideal outcomes of the effort and allow the answers to define goals and objectives. Establish methods for communicating the team’s progress with upper management. Recognize that discussing child care issues in the workplace can raise employee expectations. Unless the decision already has been made to implement a child care program, be clear with employees that the company is just gathering information and seeking feedback.

Collect Information

Good information facilitates good decision making. Planning an employee child care program requires specific knowledge of benefit packages and human resource costs, employees’ current child care arrangements, their child care ideals and the community resources available to support the program.

Benefit Packages and Human Resource Costs

Assess a variety of benefit packages and determine the potential costs and benefits of a child care program. This information is critical for analyzing which types of child care assistance will accomplish the company’s goals.

- Examine your employees’ current benefit use.
- Investigate competitors’ benefit packages.
- Estimate annual costs associated with employee benefits, tardiness, absenteeism, turnover, recruiting and training.
- Calculate potential tax benefits from providing child care programs.

Employee Child Care Arrangements and Ideals

Information on how employees are coping with child care challenges, as well as the services they would consider ideal, can be obtained in a number of ways.

- Conduct a survey of employees' current child care arrangements and problems.
- Organize focus groups to discuss employees' child care ideals.
- Include questions related to child care needs and problems in entry/exit interviews.

Community Resources

Partner with the Virginia Child Care Resource and Referral Network (VACCRRN) and its 14 regional child care resource and referral offices (CCR&R) to assess existing child care services, and to identify gaps between supply and need. In combination with employee needs, this activity is critical to understanding the local child care landscape.

- Is space available in child care programs near the work site?
- Is space available in child care programs near where employees live?
- What are the average costs for these arrangements?
- What services exist for transporting school-age children to and from these programs?
- How do employees use child care resource and referral services?

Estimate the Cost-Benefit and Cost-Effectiveness of Multiple Plans

Many of the costs of work/family conflict are easily quantifiable, such as turnover, absenteeism and tardiness. Others, such as low productivity or low morale related to work/family conflict may be less quantifiable, but still have a significant impact on a business's bottom line. Including these latter considerations into cost-benefit calculations can provide insight into the total value of an investment in a child care benefit for employees.

Prepare Recommendations/Seek Feedback

Prepare a set of recommendations based on the information collected. Submit the ideas to upper management and seek feedback.

Work Site Seminars

Work site seminars provide information and resources to employees. Working parents have limited time for classes and training, thus information provided at work can be valuable and efficient.

COST:

Employee seminars are a very inexpensive option for employers. They can be offered individually or as a series over a period of time. Presenter fees will vary depending on the number of programs to be presented and the format for each. Other expenses may include preparation of handouts and publicity materials.

BENEFITS:

- Seminars are inexpensive and easy to implement.
- They are easily adapted to reflect employee and company concerns.
- They can supplement other company programs, such as employee assistance or employee relations efforts.
- They provide a visible indication that the company is sensitive to employee needs.
- They can be used as an interim step for companies considering other child care options or as a source of information to help make these decisions.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Seminars are not a direct child care service; they do not increase supply or improve quality.
- Participation may not be widespread.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Programs can be conducted in-house with staff from training, human resources or employee assistance departments. The programs also may be developed or managed under contract with VACCRRN, or by working with staff from local departments of social services or other child care professionals.

STEPS:

1. **Decide who will present the program.** If you do not have the resources in-house, call on a child care professional from a CCR&R or a local department of social services.

2. **Design the program.** Program formats for work site seminars include:
   - *Single-topic workshops* on issues such as parenting, child development and selecting quality child care.
   - *Information fairs* with representatives and/or information available from local organizations about resources in the community.
   - *Regularly scheduled workshop sessions* that explore a topic or a series of topics in depth.
   - *Informal group meetings* in which employees can voice concerns, share information or provide support to one another.

3. **Review written materials with the presenter.** The employer and presenter should review all handouts jointly to ensure that they reinforce the company's goals and do not raise expectations for a service the company does not plan to offer.

4. **Publicize the seminar/workshop well in advance.** Publicity should begin well in advance, using regular in-house methods, such as e-mail, bulletin boards, newsletters and interoffice memos.

5. **Serve refreshments!**

6. **Conduct an evaluation and make long-term plans.**
   - Ask participants to complete evaluation forms.
   - Be prepared to report to management on the broad issues discussed.
   - Consider changing publicity methods if employees did not learn about the seminar/workshops in advance, or did not learn about it in sufficient time to arrange to be away from their work station.
   - Issues raised during discussions at seminars and workshops can supplement information gained through a written survey or highlight other work/family needs.

Ideas for Work-Site Seminars

- A bank offers a series of "Learn at Lunch" seminars for its employees on topics such as: "How to Select and Monitor Quality Child Care," and "Time-Management for Working Parents."
- A manufacturer gives employees 90 minutes off once a month to attend optional seminars held in the cafeteria on balancing work/family commitments and recognizing quality in a child care setting.
- A group of employers in a downtown area sponsors an employee information fair on local resources and programs for children and families.

Child Care Resource and Referral Services

Employers can refer employees to VACCRRN and its 14 regional CCR&R offices to assist them in locating child care. These CCR&Rs help families find child care that meets the needs of the child and family. The regional CCR&Rs maintain lists of child care in all price ranges, daytime and evening programs, summer camps, before and after school care, and care for children with mild illnesses or disabilities.

There are 14 regional CCR&R offices that provide services in all 95 counties and 40 independent cities in Virginia. These offices can be reached by calling 1-800-451-1501 or by using the contact information provided in the resource section of this document.

The regional CCR&Rs refer families to both licensed and license-exempt child care programs including Head Start programs, before and after school programs, part-day preschools and faith-based child care programs. These offices also provide information on selecting and monitoring child care, as well as the availabilities of subsidies.

Since some employees may be eligible for child care subsidies through the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), employers may want to provide information about the availability of subsidies. More information and a tool for assessing eligibility are available on the VDSS Web site: www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/index.html.

Both employers and employees may learn about the various types of regulated child care by visiting the VDSS Web site or by calling their local CCR&R office. Parents can check the compliance history of specific regulated child care programs online at www.dss.virginia.gov/facility/children.html.

In addition to providing public referrals (see above), VACCRRN and its 14 regional CCR&R offices will provide specialized referral services to meet the needs of your employees. Employers may choose “Enhanced Referral Service” or “Internet-Based Enhanced Referral Service.”

> **Enhanced Referral Service** offers employees a toll-free telephone number that connects with the CCR&R office serving the area. Referral counselors will not only determine a family’s needs through a comprehensive telephone interview, they also will contact the child care programs that most closely meet the family’s criteria and confirm that there are vacancies (saving your employees an average of eight hours of search time). Referral counselors send consumer information with referrals and follow-up with the employee.
>
> With **Internet-based Enhanced Referral Service**, an employee can search for child care via the Internet. This option is available at the click of a mouse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Employers can provide access codes to their employees so they may access this service at any time. Many employees like this option because it permits them to see the complete array of child care available. With this option, parents can also read and print consumer information posted at the site.

BENEFITS:

- Using a CCR&R carries no or low start-up cost and minimal liability.
- Using a CCR&R requires no company involvement in the selection of child care.
- The service is not job or site specific, so companies with multiple locations can serve all employees.
- Using a CCR&R can reduce search time and get employees back to work quickly.
- Referrals to reliable child care help reduce employee absenteeism.
- CCR&R agencies provide personalized referrals to a wide range of child care settings.
- The employer is making an investment in the child care community by supporting the CCR&R system.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- In areas where there is a shortage of child care, employees may still have difficulty finding care.
- This option requires ongoing promotion to inform new employees and those who are new parents.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

VACCRRN and its 14 regional CCR&R offices are able to provide information about child care referral services that best suit your company's needs.

STEPS:

1. **Conduct a needs assessment (optional).** This step may not be necessary if this is the only option the company plans to offer.

2. **Negotiate services and fees.** If the company decides to offer child care referral as an employee benefit, the next step is to contact the local CCR&R office and ask them to provide materials about the services they offer. A map of the network appears in the Resources Section.

Customizing Resource and Referral Services

- A manufacturer contracts with the regional CCR&R agency to have a representative available at the plant one day a week to provide referrals to employees.
- A business purchases CCR&R services for employees as a part of an employee benefit package, all employees receive "enhanced" referrals free of charge. "Enhanced" referrals are customized to the needs of the individual employee. All programs listed in the referral have vacancies to accept the employee's children and provide any other services the employee needs. Each case receives follow-up to ensure a successful placement.

Flexible Work Schedules

Flexible work schedules include reduced work hours, in which employees work less than full time, and restructured work hours, in which employees work something other than a traditional 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. schedule. Employees may also work off-site, either at home or in a satellite office. Potential employees, especially younger workers, are interested in when the work day is done and how it will affect their lives. To recruit young workers, to retain older workers, and to help parents balance work and family obligations, employers are offering greater flexibility in employee work schedules.

Flexible schedules and personnel policies are a cost-effective and innovative approach to the work/family needs of employees. Unlike child care, which is employee specific, flexibility can be used by employees of any age or family situation. The options described in this section can be used alone or together with other family responsive programs. Some can help avoid lay-offs and may circumvent traffic problems. Several function as an attractive recruiting tool. All options assist managers to use human resources creatively.

COST:

Employee benefits are the greatest cost associated with flexible schedules. Some employers offer full or prorated benefits to part-time workers or job sharers, others offer no benefits to those working less than a full-time schedule. Hiring a consultant to design and implement the program or train managerial staff will also add costs. Most other costs of flexible work schedules are minimal, and the savings realized by retaining workers and improving productivity can be substantial.

BENEFITS:

- Implementation of workplace policies is not a direct service by the employer.
- The policies can be offered to all employees, regardless of family status.
- They are inexpensive to implement and maintain.
- They allow managers and supervisors greater control over the use of their human resources.
- They allow employees to handle family or outside obligations in their own way, without the need for corporate intervention.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Flexible schedules may require adjustments in corporate culture for people who work non-traditional hours or who work off site.
- There may be resistance by supervisors and other employees.
- Supervisors may need special training to manage a flexible workplace.
- The costliest issue to consider may be whether to offer benefits (full or prorated) to workers on other than full-time schedules.

Types of Flexible Schedules

1. **Flextime.** Flextime refers to work schedules that permit flexible starting and quitting times. Employees work a full eight-hour day in a 40-hour workweek but choose their own starting and quitting times. Hours can be fixed or changeable depending on management and may include specific times during which everyone is at work. Typical starting hours are between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. and quitting times are between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

2. **Compress Workweek.** A compressed workweek allows employees to complete a 40-hour workweek in less than five days. The most common schedule is a 10-hour day in a four day week. The compressed workweek has been used most effectively in non-customer service areas such as manufacturing plants. It can be used by an entire work force, with rotating shifts to allow seven days a week operation, or to obtain maximum use of equipment.

3. **Telecommuting or "Flexiplace."** Advances in technology have made it easier to work off-site, as employees can work anywhere if linked electronically to the office. Telecommuting works best in easily measured, independent, project-oriented jobs. Often the employee works at home and completes tasks on a deadline basis. This option works best when the employee is linked by telephone or email and makes frequent, scheduled visits to the office. "Flexiplace" refers to alternatives to the main office, including work done at the employee's home. Some employers are placing satellite offices in locations where their workers are concentrated (the workplace comes to the workforce rather than the workforce coming to the main office). "Hoteling" is a similar option in which workers use a generic office space for work or meetings whenever needed and multiple offices are available for occasional use.

4. **Professional Part-time.** Professional part-time refers to work done at the professional level on a part-time schedule chosen by the employee and approved by management.

5. **Job Sharing.** Job sharing is a form of part-time work in which two people voluntarily share the responsibilities of one full-time position with benefits and salary prorated. Job sharing has been used by professionals who work as a team offering the employer two sets of skills for the price of one. Job sharers typically cover each other for vacations, illness or leave.

6. **V-Time (Voluntary Reduced Work Time).** V-time is a time/income trade-off program, which allows full-time employees to reduce work hours for a specified period of time with a corresponding reduction in compensation. It may be used by an individual or an entire workforce. V-time is a planned reduction in hours to accommodate schooling, family crises or return from parental leave. It can be used as an alternative to leave, to shorten a leave or as an alternative to layoffs.

7. **Phased Retirement.** Phased retirement occurs when workers who are eligible to retire do so gradually by reducing their hours rather than leaving abruptly on a given day. Phased retirement keeps the skills and knowledge of older workers available while allowing the worker more time for non-work pursuits.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

For small employers or small-scale programs, it may be possible to pilot a project with no help from experts. For large-scale or complex situations, the use of a consultant or other expert may be valuable.

STEPS:

1. **Determine the need.** Employee surveys or focus groups may be valuable in determining which options are most desirable to employees.

2. **Establish a planning and implementation committee and give it the authority to make recommendations for change.** Select people from a variety of disciplines within the company. Include financial representatives, human resources staff, parents and non-parents. This group will tackle issues of fairness and implementation, and will create buy-in and support.

3. **Decide which options to implement.** These will depend on both employee and company needs. Determine the parameters for each option. Will alternative schedules be granted only to high performers? Are some jobs unsuitable for flexible scheduling? How will eligible jobs be determined?

4. **Implement necessary policy and administrative changes.** There may be changes to head-count procedures or benefits eligibility. Managers and supervisors will require training to ensure that they understand the uses and limitations of the flexibility policy.

5. **Advertise and promote the flexible schedules.** A well-designed program that remains invisible does nothing for employer or employee.

6. **Establish evaluation procedures.** Under a flexible schedule policy there are two important, yet distinct types of evaluation: 1) Evaluation of the overall program to determine if it is meeting the business needs of the company and achieving the goals established (such as reducing the cost of office space or retaining workers); and 2) Evaluation of the individual worker.

   The two evaluations should be separate. If the worker is not meeting production goals, that is not necessarily a failure of the flexible schedule. Conversely, if the schedules adopted are not meeting client needs, there may be a scheduling problem rather than an employee failure.

7. **Continue to refine the program based on evaluation and feedback.**

Time Off and Leave Policies

A leave allows employees job-protected time off with or without pay.

Although some companies have much broader leave programs, leaves are most commonly allowed for childbirth and family illness. Time off policies allow short term time off in increments of days or portions of days with or without pay.

COST:

The cost of time off and leave policies varies depending on the program. The biggest cost factors are whether employees are paid or unpaid and how their work is covered during their absence. If an employee is paid and carries full benefits during a leave and an independent contractor is hired to cover his or her work, the cost can be substantial.

Short leaves or time off may not require the use of a replacement worker. Remember that the cost of a leave or time off policy may be offset by the savings achieved by retaining a valued employee.

BENEFITS:

- Morale is improved and the stress on families is reduced when time off is readily available during family illness or crisis.
- Unscheduled absenteeism is reduced when employees can take time off to meet family needs without having to disguise the reason.
- Leaves can reduce burn-out.
- Educational and other enrichment leaves increase the skills and knowledge brought to the workplace.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Leaves and time off may be paid or unpaid.
- Benefits and seniority need to be addressed.
- Temporary employees or consultants may be required to guarantee that the work gets done.

Care for Ill Children

Parents of young children miss an average of five to 10 workdays per year to care for ill children. Often those days are calculated as employee sick days and thus give a false picture of the true cost of work/family conflicts. Some personnel policies that assist families with sick children:

- Allow the use of an employee’s own sick time to be used to care for an ill child.
- Allow “sick child” days or “sick family member” days.
- Reimburse employees who must use a service to care for an ill child.
- Contribute to existing community programs that provide care for ill children.
- Allow short-term work at home.

Types of leaves

1. **Family and Medical Leave.** The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) went into effect August 5, 1993. It provides workers the right to take unpaid job-protected leave to meet family health needs or for the worker's own illness. FMLA currently applies to workers of employers with 50 or more employees. Maximum leave currently allowed is 12 weeks in any 12-month period.

2. **Personal Leave Time.** Employers who offer personal leave time combine sick leave and vacation time for a total number of days off. Employees are expected to manage their own leave time and to allow for possible sick days. Employers who offer personal leave time report that it reduces the number of unplanned absences because employees are able to better plan their time off. They are encouraged to schedule personal business, such as medical care and children's school events, during this time.

3. **School or Volunteer Time Off.** Some employers allow a fixed amount of time off per week, per month or per year for parents and non-parents to participate in school or other volunteer activities.

4. **Other Leave.** Employers offer other types of extended leaves for family and personal reasons. These include maternity, paternity, or family leaves, educational or sabbatical leaves, or unspecified leaves for travel or personal enrichment. The goal of these leaves is to give employees extended periods of time off (paid or unpaid) without losing the employee entirely.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

The U.S. Department of Labor administers the FMLA and has useful information on a variety of work/family topics. Other local employers who have adopted liberal leave or time-off policies also may be willing to share information.

STEPS:

1. **Determine the need and motivation.** In certain industries, advanced or continued training may be desirable. In other industries, burn-out may be a major problem, or a commitment to families may encourage an employer to offer a leave package more extensive than that required by FMLA. For whatever reason, some employers find that offering leaves and time off enables employees to achieve personal goals while remaining committed to their employer.

2. **Establish a planning committee to review options and offer recommendations.**

3. **Decide which leaves are most necessary to the company's workforce.** Establish policies for granting leaves, such as eligibility, pay during leave, health care coverage, benefits and how work will be covered during leave. Seek technical assistance to meet government regulations.

4. Implement necessary policy and administrative changes.

5. Establish evaluation procedures to ensure that the policies are achieving the identified goals.

Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP)

A dependent care assistance program (DCAP) can take three primary forms:

1. A voluntary salary reduction plan in which the employer and employee agree to reduce the employee's income by a certain amount, up to $5,000 per year of pre-tax earnings, which is placed in a flexible spending account to pay for eligible child care expenses. Regulations require that all funds in the account be expended by year end. Funds not expended are lost to the employee.
2. Employers place money into individual accounts to offset the costs of employees' child care. This is in addition to employees' current salary and benefits.
3. A combination of both the above.

Employers are not required to pay Social Security or unemployment taxes and employees are not required to pay federal or Social Security taxes on the funds put in the account. DCAPs are viewed by the IRS as a benefit and therefore are not included in the employee's taxable income, as long as the employer qualifies as a DCAP as described in Section 129 of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC).

COST:

The amount is determined at the discretion of the employer.

BENEFITS:

- DCAPS allow employers to budget expenses.
- DCAPS ensure that funds are available to meet employees' child care expenses.
- Implementation of a DCAP is a good public relations tool and can improve employer-employee relations.
- DCAPs provide a potential tax advantage for employer and employee.

CONSIDERATIONS:

The "use it or lose it" policy could adversely impact employee morale.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

It is extremely important that legal, tax and benefits consultants be involved in the establishment of the company's DCAP.

STEPS:

1. **Assess employee benefits of DCAP.** Employee benefits from the implementation of DCAPs depend on each persons' child care costs and specific tax situations. Implementation of DCAPs should take place only after ensuring employees will derive more benefits from it than the child care tax credit. An evaluation of the gross income of interested employees should be conducted; families with relatively low incomes and low dependent care expenses do not usually benefit from this program. If part of the company workforce includes minimum-wage or low-income employees who would not benefit from a salary reduction agreement, the employer might provide a subsidy to assist these employees with their child care expenses and provide a DCAP, through a salary reduction agreement, for higher income employees.

2. **Ensure the salary reduction plan meets legal requirements.** Before a Salary Reduction Plan/DCAP is established, certain legal requirements must be met for the plan to conform to IRS guidelines. The employer must meet the IRS requirements for a Dependent Care Assistance Program and a Flexible Benefits Program, as described in Section 129 of the IRC. Employers should confer with their legal counsel or tax consultant to ensure these requirements are met.

3. **Decide how the company will finance the benefits.** The following are examples of options employers have for financing the DCAP allowance:
   - By underwriting the cost of the program as an add-on above and beyond an employee's present salary and benefits.
   - Through the salary reduction plan discussed above.
   - Through a combination of both.

A corporation's legal, tax and benefits personnel are invaluable resources in deciding which alternative is best for the company.

4. **Decide how the company will reimburse the benefits.** Under the DCAP, the company has three options from which to choose when establishing a reimbursement system. They are:
   - Provide child care.
   - Contract with a third party or parties for employees' child care services.
   - Reimburse employees for child care expenses documented with receipts or canceled checks.

The expertise of legal, tax and benefits consultants are useful in determining the most appropriate reimbursement system.

5. **Communicate with employees.** The law requires that an employer provide employees with reasonable notice of the program's terms and eligibility. The notice must include a description of the child care tax credit and a statement of circumstances under which the tax credit is more advantageous to the employee than exclusion from taxes under the DCAP.

   An effort to educate employees about the benefit is often necessary. Low enrollment may result from the complicated nature of tax savings, and may be offset if the program is fully and clearly explained.

6. **Create and implement a reporting system.** Employers are required by law to report to the employee and to the IRS on the financial aspects of a DCAP. Therefore, a reporting mechanism should be designed that allows an employer to do so quickly and accurately. Reporting requirements may be obtained through the IRS.

7. **Develop an evaluation mechanism.** After the program is in place, a mechanism should be developed so that the employer can evaluate the adequacy and usefulness of the program. The evaluation should include a monthly and annual review of the budget, costs, usage figures and quality control standards and measures.

Vouchers

Employers contract with family child care providers or child care centers to serve their employees. Parents are given vouchers for all or a part of the cost of child care. Child care programs redeem the vouchers for payment through the employer.

Reimbursement

Employees choose the child care arrangement best suited to their needs and then receive a reimbursement from the company for some portion of the costs. Some employers only reimburse for certain kinds of care, such as back-up care or care for an ill child.

COST:

The cost for a voucher or reimbursement program will vary depending on the amount of the employer's contribution and the way the program is administered. A small company with a small reimbursement or voucher program may administer and monitor the program in-house. There are also firms that administer these types of programs for employers.

BENEFITS:

- Voucher or reimbursement programs carry low start-up costs.
- These systems can serve a wide age range of children.
- They offer a variety of choices and allow parents to make their own arrangements.
- The majority of the money is spent for actual child care services.
- These systems utilize existing community child care resources.
- They keep the employer out of the child care business.
- They present little exposure to liability.
- They are useful to many different types of employers.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Child care availability may not meet employee needs.
- Voucher or reimbursement programs provide limited visibility for employer.
- Voucher and reimbursement programs only address cost of child care, not quality or availability concerns.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

A lawyer may be required to help the employer clarify the nature of the voucher/reimbursement option to the employee so that the employer does not bear responsibility for any injuries that occur while child care services are being rendered. An accountant may need to review tax implications of the program. Technical assistance also may be necessary to determine the target employee group, level of reimbursement and method of reimbursement. The assistance of a firm that designs and administers voucher or reimbursement programs may be sought.

STEPS:

1. **Conduct a needs assessment to determine employee interest in this type of child care assistance.**

2. **Determine the group to be served and eligibility criteria.** Eligibility criteria should be established with the advice of a tax specialist who understands the provisions of Section 129 of the IRC, which applies if the reimbursement is to be a nontaxable benefit. Decisions must be made about whether part-time employees are eligible and whether to provide an adjusted voucher/reimbursement program for them. Additional eligibility concerns, such as how many hours per week eligible employees must work, need to be determined.

   Companies may limit eligibility to certain income groups or ages of children. In determining the income cutoff for eligible employees, note that the cost of child care presents problems for both moderate-income employees and low-income employees.

3. **Decide on the amount of subsidy and method of payment.** Employers with voucher/reimbursement programs typically set a maximum on the amount they will contribute to child care costs — based either on family income or the cost of child care.

   The simplest approach to vouchers is a flat-rate reimbursement to all employees (or those within a specified income range), regardless of the cost of care or family income. However, many companies base their vouchers on a fixed percentage of total costs, establishing a maximum ceiling on the cost of reimbursable child care. Any maximum ceiling should be high enough to allow for the use of quality programs. Another option is to pay an individual rate to employees determined on a sliding scale. A decision must be made whether to pay parents or child care programs as fees accrue, or to pay fees to parents or child care programs annually.

   A cost-benefit analysis should be conducted to compare short-term and long-term operating costs with the productivity, absenteeism and turnover advantages the voucher or reimbursement assistance provides.

4. **Decide how the program will be managed, administered and monitored.** Employers will need internal controls to administer the program or will need to hire an outside manager. There are firms that design and manage voucher programs for employers.

   Employers have a number of decisions to make about the child care programs that are eligible for reimbursement. Section 129 of the IRC specifies and defines a "qualified care plan." Check with a tax advisor on the applicability of this definition for business. Some employers allow the use of child care that is not licensed, such as employee relatives. Some employers select child care programs that are licensed or that meet predefined quality criteria. Eligible child care program choices should correspond with employees' stated needs.

5. **Plan a marketing strategy.** An employer should make certain that employees understand how the voucher/reimbursement system works. Depending on who manages and administers the program, information can be disseminated via e-mail, work site seminars, informational flyers and bulletin board notices.

6. **Develop an evaluation mechanism.** Once the program is in place, a mechanism should be developed to evaluate its usefulness. The evaluation should include a regular review of the budget versus costs, usage figures, quality control standards and measures, and an annual program review.

Purchase of Space

The employer arranges to reserve a specified number of spaces in a local child care program, often one near the workplace. Parent fees may cover most or all of the cost of the spaces used, but the company often reimburses all or a portion of the cost of the unused spaces so the child care program can afford to leave spaces vacant for the employer to use.

Discount Program

The employer arranges for employees to have a fee lower than that typically charged. An employer can make this arrangement with a single child care program or several programs. The difference in fees may be absorbed by the employer, or the child care program might allow a discount for families.

COST:

Costs will vary depending on the type of programs chosen, the cost of each space, the number of spaces negotiated, and the average cost of local child care services and administration.

BENEFITS:

- These programs require no capital investment or start-up costs.
- They can help reduce employees' child care costs.
- They can serve a wide age range of children.
- They require minimal management and administrative responsibility.
- They are applicable to any size company.
- Additional spaces can be purchased as needed.
- Programs can be modified according to employees' needs.
- They create a link between the employer and community-based child care programs.
- They can meet emergency or temporary child care needs.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- These programs may be viewed as an endorsement of certain child care providers or programs (a potential exposure to liability).
- Child care programs may not be available, accessible or affordable, rendering the arrangement ineffective.
- Employers may unknowingly endorse a poor-quality child care program. Visit Virginia Department of Social Services' online records of licensing compliance and violations history for any child care program under consideration — www.dss.virginia.gov.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Legal assistance may be required in negotiating contracts with child care programs to ensure limited liability for the company.

STEPS:

1. **Conduct a needs assessment to determine employee interest in this type of child care assistance.**

2. **Identify programs near the worksite or in other geographic areas.** There may be a number of child care programs near a company's location that meet the child care needs of employees. The regional CCR&Rs can assist an employer in locating existing child care programs to meet employees' child care needs.

3. **Negotiate a contract with the child care program(s).** By purchasing spaces in a child care program, employers have leverage to negotiate for a discount. An employer can negotiate with one or a number of programs. The more programs negotiated, the more child care choices for employees. The company will need to establish criteria for the selection of quality child care programs that protect the employer from exposure to liability.

4. **Decide how to manage the program.** A company may decide to subsidize part of the child care costs by offering a discount to employees. A sliding fee scale, based on the employee's income and/or family size, can also be developed, or an employer may choose to pay a flat fee per child.

   A DCAP should be set up for any ongoing employer contributions to make them nontaxable to the employee. Since DCAPs are regulated through the IRS, a tax consultant or local IRS agent should assist the employer in its establishment.

   A company also may decide to pay the child care programs a lump sum to reserve the spaces for its employees beforehand; employees are then responsible for paying the weekly or monthly balance directly to the child care program.

5. **Publicize the program.** Employees must be informed about all of the child care programs participating in an employers' purchase of space or discount program as well as the fee structure and payment system. Employees should be encouraged to visit all programs before making a child care choice. Employers can publicize the program via e-mail, work site seminars, informational flyers and bulletin board notices.

6. **Develop record-keeping procedures and a payment system.** Employers should first establish financial management and record-keeping systems so that they can monitor costs, employee use of the program and other administrative issues. Employers also can develop a system of payment to the participating child care programs.

Space Purchasing and Program Discounts
An employer furnishes start-up funds so a family child care provider can become licensed. In turn, the provider reserves slots for employees' children.

Another company can offer discounts at a local child care center. Employees can use this child care center at a discount.

Creating and Supporting Child Care Services

Community Resource Assessment

Before creating new child care programs, employers need to assess the child care services that are already available. This includes examining the local child care landscape, determining gaps in child care services and recognizing the child care services already in ample supply. Establishing new child care programs when a corresponding need does not exist can result in costly errors.

VACCRRN and its 14 regional CCR&R offices can assist with this task. The CCR&Rs can monitor child care supply and demand by child age and by geographic region, as well as provide information on the availability of special types of child care, such as care for ill children, and evening and weekend care.

Before planning new child care services for employees, employers should determine:
- Availability of space at child care programs near the worksite.
- Availability of space at child care programs in the communities where employees live.
- Average fees for child care services in the community.

This information will allow employers to focus their energy and resources on filling genuine gaps in child care services.

On-Site/Near-Site Child Care Centers

On-site child care generates publicity and good will for the company, but it is by far the most expensive and complex solution to employee child care needs. Only the largest and most sophisticated employers have the resources to undertake such a project alone. For most others, the assistance and involvement of other community partners is critical, as is a thorough analysis of child care in the surrounding community. Potential partners might include the CCR&R agency, other employers, and other members of the community, such as school districts, public institutions, existing child care providers, business organizations and others.

In a child care consortium, a group of geographically related companies share the expenses of operating a child care center for their employees. This option is particularly suitable for small companies, downtown businesses and industrial parks in which a large total workforce is centered.

COST:

The cost of building and operating an on-site or near-site child care center varies depending on a number of factors, including size of the facility, type of program, hours of operation and ages of the children served.

Virginia regulations require 35 square feet per child not including hallways, nap areas, the kitchen, storage or offices for all newly built or renovated child care centers. Newly licensed centers that have purchased a current licensed center may operate with 25 square feet per child. In addition to building costs, additional capital costs include: a playground with equipment, fencing and a resilient surface; classroom furniture; toys; supplies; a commercial kitchen; parking and site preparation; and architectural and engineering fees.

The ongoing financial and philosophical support of the sponsoring employer is critical to the long-term success of the center.

BENEFITS:

- With an on-site or near-site center, the employer has a great deal of control over the program, hours of operation, cost and size.
- Employees feel secure knowing that their children are nearby.
- An on-site center creates more child care, usually of high quality.
- An on-site center generates positive public relations both within the company and the community.
- An on-site center can be a valuable recruitment and retention tool.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- On-site centers can be very costly to start and operate.
- They require a long-term financial and philosophical commitment.
- They require employer involvement in an area outside the core business.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

The research, planning and design of a child care center is complex, and requires a great deal of knowledge about child care and the community in which the facility will be located. While the sponsoring employer must remain actively involved, it is recommended that a professional be hired to assist throughout every phase of the project and to stay closely involved. An effective consultant will:

- Understand quality child care.
- Know the community.
- Know child care regulations and procedures.
- Remain objective during the research phase, especially if many options are being considered.

STEPS:

1. **Identify an internal team with recommendation or decision-making authority.**

2. **Hire a professional to help analyze internal and external needs.**

3. **Conduct a thorough analysis of internal and external needs.** Use employee surveys or discussion groups to determine employee wants and needs, current child care use and expenditures. Develop a demographic profile of the workforce, including average salary levels, employees' age, and the number and age of employees' children. Partner with CCR&R to conduct a community needs assessment to determine the current status of child care, including cost, availability and gaps in service.

4. **Once a decision has been made to proceed, hire an operator or a consultant to carry the project forward.** The operator may be a for-profit or not-for-profit operator of child care facilities, a department of the company or a non-profit entity created by the company to operate the center.

5. **A consultant or operator hired at this phase of the project should have the following skills:**
   - Ability to work with company representatives and help define the company's long-term role in the project.
   - In the case of a consortium, or group of employers, the ability to work with and direct the group. Managing the consortium itself and keeping members involved and on track can be critical to the project's success.
   - Ability to gather and refine cost information for building or renovating and operating a facility.
   - Knowledge of, and contact with, appropriate officials or professionals regarding zoning issues, child care regulations, contractors, architects and potential operators of the facility (if one has not already been chosen).
   - Ability to develop, with company input, a Request for Proposal seeking an operator for the facility (if this was not done earlier in the project).

6. **Early on, contact with the local licensing office may avoid potential problems.**

7. **Implementation:**
   - Determine program features: age groups served, capacity, hours of operation and staffing.
   - Develop the education program and select a curriculum.
   - Select the site.
   - Determine the legal structure.
   - Hire an operator.

Improving Child Care Programs in the Community

Thriving communities are vital to all businesses. Companies that find ways to give back to the community through volunteer programs and charitable giving, strengthen the local community and enhance their public images. High-quality child care is an essential part of community infrastructure and is critical to building and supporting a strong workforce. Employers can support existing child care programs by funding special projects, such as scholarships for teachers and specialized training opportunities, or by providing grants to improve child care facilities.

Employers also can participate in the availability of high-quality child care for working parents by providing in-kind assistance; such as legal, tax or financial counsel; technical assistance regarding benefits programs or vendor contracts; or facility maintenance and repair.

COST:

There are no fixed costs to investing in the community. Funds may come through the company's charitable arm, through direct employee contributions, or through direct corporate expenditures. Investments in the community range from very small grants and donations to large-scale community investment.

BENEFITS:

- Contributions, whether monetary or in-kind, can enhance an employer's public image.
- They can boost employee morale and loyalty.
- They can improve working conditions community-wide for current and future workforce.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Partial support cannot ensure survival of a program.
- Competition may be intense for a relatively small amount of money.
- For greater impact, small donors may need to combine their gifts with others.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Companies with a charitable giving department may be able to identify child care needs or initiatives in the community. The CCR&Rs also can be a good source for information. Some employers find that starting or joining community initiatives enables them to increase the value of their financial contribution without getting directly involved in specific child care programs.

STEPS:

1. **Explore opportunities for involvement.** Ask employees about their child care arrangements and seek their input on potential strategies for supporting or improving these programs. Additionally, contact the CCR&R and ask about local or statewide initiatives that might benefit from employer support. Some child care initiatives are first implemented on a trial basis in selected areas of the state; employers may decide to replicate these initiatives in their local communities.

2. **Determine the amount of the financial contribution and the degree of involvement.** Work with an accountant or tax counsel to evaluate tax advantages or credits available for these types of contributions.

3. **After making the contribution, whether financial, in-kind or volunteer, evaluate the impact of the initiative on employees and/or the larger community.**

Partnerships

Because of the challenges of working independently to create and support child care services, many employers find that partnering with others to improve the availability and quality of child care is less costly and more efficient. These partnerships can occur between different employers, or between employers and the community.

Partnering with Other Employers

For many employers, the most effective strategy for addressing child care concerns is to engage other employers in the process. A group of employers working together has a larger workforce from which to draw families and also shares the cost and oversight of a child care initiative. These groups may work in a consortium to provide a specific service or as part of a network to discuss work/family issues common to their employees.

Partnering with the Community

Depending on the needs and gaps in services in a community, employers might join with community groups to identify problems or provide services. Potential partners could include almost any organization in the community. Common partners include the regional CCR&R, educational institutions, United Way, Success by 6, local departments of social services, school districts and existing child care programs.

Outside the child care and educational community, economic development agencies, rural development agencies, Chambers of Commerce and civic organizations may provide opportunities for partnerships to address the issue.

The process of completing a community resource assessment (see page F1) should identify gaps and needs in the community as well as potential partners for addressing them. After examining child care supply and demand, determining employer contributions and formulating a strategic plan, consortiums can make an informed decision.

Family/Group Child Care Homes. Family child care is a child care arrangement in which 12 or fewer children are cared for in a private home. Family child care homes caring for six or more children who do not reside in the home, must be licensed with the state. Homes caring for more than four children under age 2, including resident children, must be licensed or voluntarily registered. Virginia also licenses family day care systems, authorizing the system to approve member homes. Companies can form or fund networks of child care homes to provide child care for their employees. Employers may also fund programs to recruit and train providers to meet specific child care needs for their employees. Community partners for such programs include CCR&Rs, educational or training organizations and family child care associations.

School-age Care. School-age care programs provide care before and after school, for school holidays and during summer vacation. These programs can be housed in schools or in other locations around the community. Employers can start, or help start, these kinds of programs if they are needed in the community.

Employers also can provide in-kind support for schools and school programs, such as transportation, computers, classroom volunteers and homework help lines or tutors.

Child Care for Mildly Ill Children

Employers can work together to establish child care arrangements for children who are mildly ill or recovering from a health problem that keeps them from attending school or their usual child care program. These programs may be provided on-site in an employer supported sick-bay, at a community hospital, or in a home-based or center-based child care program. Potential community partners for ill child care programs include hospitals and other health care providers, and existing child care centers licensed to provide care for children who are ill.

Back-up Care

There are times when child care arrangements fail and a back-up facility is needed. Employers may contract with a provider of back-up care or reimburse employees who must use back-up care. An employer or group of employers could also partner with child care centers or family child care homes to provide this service.

COST:

The cost of partnerships with other employers or with the community varies depending on the program chosen.

BENEFITS:

- Employer contributions may go further when pooled with others.
- These partnerships provide positive public relations for employers.
- They are effective for employee recruiting and retention.
- They can assist in sustaining quality child care initiatives.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Collaborating with others often takes more time.
- The demand for services may be unpredictable.
- In employer partnerships, success may depend on one employer taking leadership for the initiative.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

When partnering with others to address child care needs, the first step is to contact the regional CCR&R to assess existing services and gaps, and to learn about state and local child care initiatives.

STEPS:

1. **Conduct an internal needs assessment to determine employee needs.**

2. **Contact the regional CCR&R to assess local child care services and initiatives.**

3. **Identify appropriate employer or community partners.**

4. **Analyze possible solutions and choose the program that best solves workforce and community needs.** Determine the program features, make financial projections and develop a marketing strategy.

5. **Decide whether the program will be managed by one of the partners or contracted to an independent agency.**

6. **After implementing the program, evaluate the impact of the initiative on employees and/or the larger community.**

Tips for Surveying Employees About Child Care

Before establishing corporate work/family benefits, it is a good idea to determine employee needs. There are many ways to do this: human resource departments often have a good idea of work/family problems being encountered by employees. Focus groups or discussion groups may identify problems and suggestions. Surveys may provide an anonymous way for employees to express their concerns. Professional surveys (written, telephone or internet) can be expensive.

For companies considering an expensive child care program, such as an on-site center, the cost of a survey may be well worth the expense. For a company wishing to gather general information about the child care needs of the workforce, a simple and inexpensive method of gathering data likely is sufficient. A questionnaire placed in a newsletter or a survey handed out in the cafeteria may supply enough information to give managers an idea of the child care concerns of the workforce. Be aware that this type of informal surveying simply displays the concerns and ideas of those who choose to respond.

Focus or discussion groups can be used to help define child care needs or help define the questions that might be asked during a formal survey. In either case, a focus or discussion group gives employees an opportunity to share their ideas and concerns, and identify key issues.

Be aware that asking questions about child care or work/family needs can raise expectations in the workplace. Be clear about the goals and purpose of the questions.

Demographic Information

Some or all of the following demographic information may help define workforce needs:

- Zip code of residence.
- Employee age.
- Employee gender.
- Marital status.
- Number and ages of children or other dependents.
- Family income.
- Shift worked.
- Transportation used to get to work.
- Employment status of spouse.

Other Potential Areas to Cover in an Employee Survey or Focus Group

- Type of care currently used by employees during work hours.
- Amount paid per week for child care.
- Level of satisfaction with current child care.
- Amount an employee might be willing to pay for high quality child care.
- Information about how people look for child care.
- Information about what is important to employees when selecting child care, such as cost, location or quality.

- Where employees prefer care be located (near home, near work, other).
- The need for special types of care, such as care for ill children, care for children with disabilities, summer care, evening or weekend care and back-up programs when the regular caregiver is unavailable.
- Areas of greatest work/family need:
  - Child care assistance.
  - Elder care assistance.
  - Flexible work schedules.
  - Parenting information.
  - Other.
- Questions about the kind of work/family conflicts employees have experienced and the impact on their ability to perform their job.
- Information on the number of days missed because of family responsibilities.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

If expertise is available within the company to develop, distribute and analyze a survey effectively, outside assistance may not be required. If the company is considering an inexpensive work/family benefit, such as offering seminars, a survey or other needs assessment is not necessary. However, when considering an expensive benefit, such as on-site child care, it is important, and probably worth the expense, to have a professional develop a survey instrument to analyze the needs of the workforce. CCR&R consultants, employee benefits consultants, market research firms, colleges, universities and some vendors of on-site child care have the ability to perform needs assessments for clients. Be sure that those involved in this process understand quality child care.

Employer Resources

Virginia Child Care Resource and Referral Network

308 Turner Rd., Suite A
Richmond, VA 23225
804-285-0846 or 866-481-1913
Referrals: 1-800-451-1501
info@vaccrrn.org
www.vaccrrn.org

The Virginia Child Care Resource and Referral Network (VACCRRN) and its member agencies encourage the development, maintenance and expansion of quality child care through the education of consumers, providers and the community. CCR&R works to increase public awareness of the need for quality, affordable and available child care.

Virginia Department of Social Services

7 North 8th Street
Richmond, VA 23219
804-726-7000 or 1-800-552-3431
www.dss.virginia.gov

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) Child Care and Development Division provides extensive training for child care providers as well as funding to enhance the quality, affordability and supply of child care available to Virginia's families. Through the Division of Licensing Programs, VDSS carries out state law related to the operation of such facilities and conducts inspections to ensure compliance with state laws and regulations.

United Way Success By 6®

540-375-7681
brookst@yourunitedway.org
www.yourunitedway.org

United Way Success By 6® is the nation's largest network of early childhood coalitions, bringing together business, government and non-profit sectors in new ways to give young children the best start in life.

Corporate Voices for Working Families

1899 L Street NW, Suite 250
Washington, DC 20036
202-429-0217
www.cvworkingfamilies.org

Corporate Voices for Working Families is a non-partisan, non-profit corporate membership organization created to bring the private sector voice into the public dialogue on issues affecting working families.

Families and Work Institute

267 Fifth Ave., Floor 2
New York, NY 10016
212-465-2044
www.familiesandwork.org

Families and Work Institute (FWI) is a nonprofit center for research that provides data to inform decision-making on the changing workforce, changing family and changing community.

Working Mother Media

60 East 42nd Street, 27th Floor
New York, NY 10165
212-351-6400
www.workingmother.com

Working Mother Media is a multi-media marketing company that provides strategies and solutions for millions of consumers, specifically working mothers and female business owners, as well as a corporate audience of CEOs, top executive decision-makers and human resource professionals.

Business Roundtable

1615 L Street NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20036
202-872-1260
info@businessroundtable.org
www.businessroundtable.org

Business Roundtable is an association of chief executive officers of leading U.S. corporations with a combined workforce of more than 10 million employees in the United States. The Roundtable is committed to advocating public policies that ensure vigorous economic growth, a dynamic global economy and the well-trained and productive U.S. workforce essential for future competitiveness.

The Committee for Economic Development

2000 L Street NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036
202-296-5860
info@ced.org
www.ced.org

The Committee for Economic Development (CED) is an independent, non-partisan organization of business and education leaders dedicated to policy research on the major economic and social issues of our time and the implementation of its recommendations by the public and private sectors.

VACCRRN Network of 14 CCR&R Offices

1. Caroline County CCR&R Cooperative Extension
111-B Ennis St., Bowling Green, VA 22427 • 804-633-6550

2. Child & Family Connection
312 Waller Mill Rd., Suite 500, Williamsburg, VA 23185 • 757-229-7940

3. ChildCare Connection/Page County
P.O. Box 12, Stanley, VA 22851 • 540-778-4600

4. Childcare Connection
411 Stone Spring Rd., Harrisonburg, VA 22801 • 540-564-5892

5. The Childcare Network
1907 Charles St., Suite E, Fredericksburg, VA 22401 • 540-373-3275

6. InterCounty ChildCare Connection
P.O. Box 65, King William, VA 23086 • 804-693-9446

7. Child Care Link Council of Community Services
502 Campbell Ave., Roanoke, VA 24016 • 540-985-0131

8. Children, Youth & Family Services
115 W. Jefferson St., Charlottesville, VA 22902 • 434-295-2638

9. Fairfax County Office Child Care Assistance & Referral for Children
12011 Government Center Pkwy., Suite 920, Fairfax, VA 22035 • 703-324-8225

10. Alliance for Families and Children
2600 Memorial Ave., Suite 201, Lynchburg, VA 24501 • 434-528-5437

11. Child Care Connect, RADA
112 Beech St., Suite 3, Gate City, VA 24251 • 877-222-5437

12. Memorial Child Guidance Clinic – KID Care
200 N. 22nd St., Richmond, VA 23223 • 804-644-9611

13. The Planning Council
130 W. Plume St., Norfolk, VA 23510 • 757-627-3993

14. People, Inc. of Southwest VA.
1173 W. Main St., Abington, VA 24210 • 276-619-2224